



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

ICE ARRESTS TABC EMPLOYEE TIED TO DRUG MURDER ***El Paso woman named in 8-count indictment along with 6 other suspected narcotics traffickers***

EL PASO – U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) special agents yesterday arrested a woman here following an eight-count indictment on drug-smuggling charges, and for not reporting to authorities information regarding the Juarez, Mexico, murder of a U.S. citizen woman.

Diana Marquez, 49, a Texas Alcohol Beverage Commission (TABC) tax compliance officer, was arrested in her home in the 12000 block of Amstater. Authorities suspect she is connected to a major Mexican drug cartel. She is named in an eight-count indictment that charges her and six others with conspiring to possess and import 1,000 kilograms (2,200 lbs.) or more of marijuana. Marquez, a naturalized citizen, has been employed with TABC for six years.

A federal grand jury Wednesday indicted her and the following six others: Hector Leonel Marquez-Ramos, 43, a legal resident; Ruben Acosta Vargas, 21, a Mexican citizen; Carlos Fabian Pando, 24, a Mexican citizen; Daniel Martinez, 41, a Mexican citizen; Mario Alonso Marquez Ramos, 49, a Mexican citizen; and Esaul Guerrero, 24, a U.S. citizen.

Hector Leonel Marquez-Ramos, Vargas and Pando are already in federal custody on related drug charges. Martinez, Mario Alonso Marquez-Ramos and Guerrero, Diana Marquez's son, are fugitives believed to be hiding in Mexico.

"ICE special agents are relentless when it comes to investigating and dismantling drug trafficking organizations, and we're using our broad authority to lock up these unscrupulous smugglers and traffickers, whose criminal lifestyle includes killing in cold blood," Keith J. Perniciaro, who heads the El Paso ICE Office of Investigations, said.

According to the indictment, all seven defendants, between January 2004 and Feb. 15, 2005, conspired to possess 1,000 kilograms or more of marijuana with the intent to distribute.

In addition, Hector Leonel Marquez-Ramos, Vargas, Martinez, Mario Alonso Marquez Ramos, and Guerrero are charged with intentionally conspiring with each other to willfully, deliberately, maliciously, and with premeditation and malice, kill Maria Elidia Liuzza by choking her and beating her. The murder allegedly occurred Feb. 15 in Juarez.

Liuzza's body has not been recovered. Liuzza was allegedly murdered in a Juarez house owned by the Marquez drug-trafficking organization a few days before Mexican federal authorities discovered five tons of marijuana stashed in underground tunnels in a house east of Juarez.

The indictment also states that Hector Leonel Marquez-Ramos, Mario Alonso Marquez Ramos, Esaul Guerrero and Diana Marquez shall forfeit to the United States any property constituting, or derived from proceeds obtained directly or indirectly as a result of such violations, including but not limited to a \$10 million judgment.

The Drug Enforcement Administration and El Paso Police Department also participated in the investigation.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.